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## E. German scientist sentenced to 8 years for buying classified US military data

By William F. Doherty  
Globe Staff

An East German scientist who admitted he purchased classified military documents was sentenced yesterday to eight years in prison and fined \$5000.

The sentence was imposed by US District Judge David S. Nelson, who said he hoped it would deter other countries from using scientists and academics as spies.

Alfred Zehe, 45, a professor of physics at the University of Dresden, was arrested in November 1983 while attending a scientific conference at the Sheraton Boston Hotel.

According to the indictment, Zehe paid \$15,800 for classified information given him by a Navy civilian employee who was working for the FBI as a double agent.

Zehe faced a potential of four life sentences plus an additional 40 years and \$40,000 in fines. He pleaded guilty in February to seven counts of espionage and a single count of conspiracy.

Zehe, who is living on Commonwealth avenue in Back Bay, remains free in \$1 million bail. Over the objections of acting US

Atty. Robert S. Mueller 3d, Nelson allowed the German to report to prison on his own when the US Bureau of Prisons decides where he will serve his sentence. Mueller wanted Zehe locked up immediately.

Mueller said espionage by the "Soviet Union and their surrogates are at an all-time high. There are more pending investigations than at any time since World War II."

Much of the four-hour sentencing procedure was conducted in the judge's chambers. Mueller said he wanted to present Nelson with information of "a sensitive nature."

In imposing the sentence, Nelson said he considered that no harm was done to US interests because the documents were screened by the FBI before they were turned over to Zehe and some were "on the verge of obsolescence."

Nelson said Zehe's espionage was "influenced by a desire to maintain his academic and travel licences."

Zehe provided William H. Tanner Jr., an engineer at the Naval

Electronics Systems Engineering Center in Charleston, S.C., with a special camera and film that Tanner used to photograph classified documents. Zehe was given information relating to an antisubmarine system and a Navy communications master plan.

Tanner, at the request of the FBI, initiated contact with the East Germans by going to their embassy in Washington and offering to sell classified information. He was ultimately referred to Zehe, who at the time was teaching at the University of Pueblo in Mexico. Tanner also met with Zehe in East Berlin.

In addition to the \$15,800 he received from Zehe, Tanner was paid \$6000 by other East German officials for documents he provided.

Zehe is a specialist in solid state physics, the holder of three doctorates and a dozen patents, including two US patents. He has lectured extensively in the United States, Mexico and Europe.

His lawyer, Harvey A. Silverglate, urged the judge not to imprison Zehe but rather permit him to return to Germany.